

Council on Aging Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Thursday, February 23, 2023

The regular meeting of the Council on Aging Board was held on Thursday, February 23, 2023, at 10:00am at the Walpole Council of Aging with the following members present; Josette Burke, Mary Jones, Sandyha Malur, Janet Fasanella, Linda Winslow, Jim Pellegrine, Marcia St Louis, and JoAnne Mulligan. Also in attendance was COA Director Kerri McManama, COA Outreach Worker Jillian Newman, and Nancy Aicardi. Two (2) guests were in attendance.

Absent: Joanne DiPietro, Meaghan, Priest

10:00 AM: The Monthly Meeting was called to order by Josette Burke

1. Attendance was taken, and then the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
2. Sandy Pellegrine on Memory Care and Living with Dementia
 - Overall Dementia is many diseases, not just one
 - a. Symptoms can impact a person's ability to think, recall, communicate and complete daily activities
 - b. Currently 47.5 million people live with a form of dementia
 - Causes
 - a. Alzheimer's - the most common
 - b. Parkinson's Disease
 - c. Huntington's Disease
 - d. Vascular Dementia
 - e. Traumatic Brain Injury
 - What is normal
 - a. As we age, we "slow down" – does not mean that we have dementia
 - b. In order for it to be Dementia, it has to affect two areas of your life: Memory, Communication and Language, Ability to Focus and Pay Attention, Reasoning and Judgment, Visual Perception (depth perception)
 - Signs and Symptoms
 - a. Repetitive questioning and storytelling
 - b. Odd or inappropriate behaviors
 - c. Forgetfulness of recent events (short term memory issues)
 - d. Repeated falls or loss of balance
 - e. Personality changes
 - f. Decline in planning and organization (not paying bills, dirty house, etc.)
 - g. Changes in diet/eating habits (huge weight loss or gain)
 - h. Changes in hygiene
 - i. Increased apathy
 - j. Changes in language abilities, including comprehension (finding the right word, using inappropriate words)
 - Impact
 - a. Communication
 - b. Recognition
 - c. Perception
 - d. Orientation
 - How to help or support a person with Dementia
 - a. Focus on their abilities, not what they can't do

- b. Maintain a healthy diet
 - c. Minimize stress – “join them in their reality”, don’t contradict
 - d. Prioritize safety – most important
 - 1. If they wander, put a big Stop sign on inside of exit doors
 - 2. Hardest thing to do is to take away their car keys
 - e. Assist with recognition and orientation
 - f. Find new ways to communicate
 - 1. Gestures and non-verbal communication
 - 2. Just guide them
 - Caregivers
 - a. Keep other people “in the loop”, you can’t do it alone
 - b. If you start to notice symptoms, get in touch with their doctor – there are medications that can slow the progression
3. Review of January Meeting Minutes
- There were no additions or corrections noted
 - Janet motioned and Marcia seconded the motion to accept the January Minutes as is
 - The vote was 6-0-1 to accept the January minutes with Sandyha abstaining as she was absent
4. Outreach Update – Jillian Newman (slides were provided)
- The total Outreach number for January was 449 to 270 unique individuals
 - a. The most common method remains by phone, but there were 112 in-person office visits
 - b. The most common referral method remains as “self
 - c. Jillian provided slides including a Pie Chart with the breakdown of categories of Outreach
 - 1. Medical Rides continues to be a big demand and there was a big jump over last month
 - Center is now limiting rides to one ride/week per person and to a maximum of a 10-mile radius
 - Center has started tracking requests they were unable to fulfill and the reason why
 - RSVP is working with the COA to take some of the rides, but they need to hire additional drivers
 - Another “feel good” story
 - a. There was a gentleman living on an upper floor of senior housing
 - b. He was very frail and unable to leave his unit as a result
 - c. A first floor unit finally became available, but he had only \$200 that he could spare for a mover
 - d. He called the COA, and Jillian called a contact of his at HESSCO to coordinate the move
 - e. HESSCO helped the man to pack
 - f. Society of St. Vincent de Paul paid for the movers
5. State of the Center – Kerri McManama (slides were provided)
- Check-ins
 - a. Check in count continues to increase – there were 2,848 total check-ins in January
 - b. The Average Daily Attendance for January was 142
 - c. Kerri thinks it might be because of the mild weather
 - d. Check in by Age Group is now more accurate as the Center has eliminated all the incorrect DOBs
 - Other Updates
 - a. Finance Committee Budget Meeting was February 13th
 - b. Center is working on finding additional items/substitutions for Breakfast to cover school vacations and the summer when we won’t receive the usual items

- c. Walpole Day is going to be May 13th – Kerri is considering setting up a subcommittee to help the Center plan for coverage, etc.
 - d. Many programs are full with waitlists through the end of February
 - On Wednesday February 9th there were 199 seniors at the Center with no special programming scheduled
 - Chair Yoga – there are 20 people on the waiting list (Walpole residents), so a streaming option has been added (Zoom)
 - January Events
 - a. Coffee and Conversation – average attendance was 49!! (Wills and Trusts, Boston Post Cane, Songs and Stories-Johnny Cash, Soup Master)
 - b. Center Birthday Party – 89 participants
 - c. Movie Matinee – 47 participants
 - Upcoming events
 - a. Coffee and Conversation (Falls and Home Modifications, The Crusades, The Power and the Passion: The Turbulent Fortunes of the Medici Dynasty, The Art of Reiki, Right Size Your Life by Downsizing your Stuff)
 - b. AARP Tax Prep Mondays by Appointment
 - c. Two Heart Saver CPR AED Class
 - d. Lions Club Spaghetti Dinner
 - e. Stories of Historic Walpole Interviews for seniors by the Historical Society
 - f. St. Patrick's Day Breakfast with the Walpole Fire Department – Note: Center will close at noon
 - g. Restorative Yoga
 - h. Bingo with the Girl Scouts
6. Finance Update – (Sandyha provided slides)
- Total spent in January was \$2,156.68 (Operating Budget)
 - a. Still on track for FY spending – a total of \$19,496.80 of \$43,600.00 has been spent
 - A total of \$1,769.99 of the Formula Grant was spent in January (does not include funds spent on salaries)
 - Gifts
 - a. The Center received a total of \$1,725.00 in gifts in January
 - b. A total of \$1,474.29 was spent in January leaving a balance of \$19,109.08
7. Old Business
- New Board Nametags – will now simply say “COA Board Member”
8. New Business
- Walpole Housing Update
 - a. There were no meetings in February due to various reasons
 - b. Communication is somewhat better, but there are still issues
 - c. They now have a permanent resident Board Member – resident of Diamond Pond
 - d. The last meeting was cancelled at the last minute with no notice including to resident
 - Master Plan Update – still on hold as the Committee is still waiting for the red-lined copy from the consultant
 - Select Board Update
 - a. No Update as the Select Board Meeting was very brief due to the Legislative Breakfast
 - Friends of Walpole Update
 - a. No Update as Rich did not attend today's meeting
 - Legislative Breakfast
 - a. There are 4 Legislators: John Rogers – precincts 1, 2, 6, 7; Ted Philips – precincts 1, 2a, 3, 4, 5a; Marcus Vaughn – precinct 5; and Paul McMurtry – precinct 8
 - b. Held at Walpole High School this time instead of State House

- c. A decision had been made to go with 4 or 5 issues rather than a long list to present to the legislators
 - 1. Prison – Walpole wants a “seat at the table” to be apprised of any decisions to be made. Walpole wants to ensure that there are no “backroom decisions” that they will not be aware of
 - 2. Tri-County
 - Currently there is a \$280 million price tag – the State will only pay \$80 million, the same for a “regular” high school
 - There are 11 communities that are a part of Tri-County – each community will pay the tuition based on the number of their students as usual, plus whatever the cost of the new building
 - A new school will carry a minimum of \$1 million price tag for Walpole
 - The 11 communities that are a part of Tri-County will be meeting in a week to prepare a plan
 - Currently October 24th has been set for a Yes/No Vote by the 11 communities to go forward with building a new school
 - i. The majority carries the vote no matter what
 - ii. The difference between the vote for Tri-County and Walpole’s Charter - any vote requires the prior knowledge of how much and for how long a term
 - 3. Kraft Train / MBTA
 - The MBTA is “talking” about possibly moving the platform down by Gilmore’s to alleviate the safety issues currently at the station
 - No decisions have been made, and this is very much in the future
- Potential Board Candidates
 - a. The Executive Board will be meeting next week to choose a candidate and make their recommendation to the Select Board
- Topics for Future Meetings:
 - a. March: Mark Gallivan
 - b. April: Brendan Croak of the Recreation Department
 - c. May: Formation of Nominating Committee for June Elections
 - d. June: Elections; also “Deep Dive” of this past year, and any topics, etc. for next year
- 9. Open Forum
 - a. No questions from the guests

Next Meeting scheduled for March 23rd, 10:00 AM at the Center

Josette asked for a Motion to Adjourn – Sandyha motioned, and JoAnne seconded
 After a unanimous vote, the Meeting was adjourned at 11:40 AM